

Pieris brassicae (L.) in South America

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It is generally regarded that *Pieris brassicae* was accidentally introduced into Chile (Valparaíso) in 1971 with imported goods from Eastern Europe; its presence in Chile was first noted by González (1972) and later expanded upon by Gardiner (1974). The actual route by which *P. brassicae* entered Chile has, however, not been ascertained, and probably never will be. However, a short paper published by the Ministry of Agriculture in Uruguay described *P. brassicae* as a pest (Anonymous, 1920). The existence of this paper gave substance to the possibility, although somewhat remote, that the Chilean population had originated from Uruguay.

The short paper named *Pieris brassicae* specifically and included a photograph of skeletonisation of cabbage caused by the larvae and photographs of both sexes of the imago. A description of the species was given and several methods of control recommended.

The matter was therefore taken up with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in Montevideo, who were able to sort out the validity of this publication. Apparently, it was a common error at that time to nominate native Uruguayan species with names of similar-looking European species. Furthermore, the Ministry stated that *P. brassicae* had not figured in any species lists in Uruguay. The species which Anonymous (1920) had referred to as *P. brassicae* is therefore most certainly *Tatochila autodice* (Hübner) which also feeds off cabbages and is a member of the Pierinae. Thus any possibility that *P. brassicae* had crossed the Andes or had been introduced from Uruguay to Chile via trade routes is rejected and adds support to Gardiner's theory of outside origin. Meanwhile *P. brassicae* is thriving well in Chile and has spread 60-70 km. east of the original site (González, pers. comm. in Ripa 1978) and has now spread southwards to Santiago and Concepción where it is currently threatening the rape seed cash crop (Campos 1978, pers. comm.).

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References

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